

**DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES**

**Regulation 4VAC15-360. Fish: Aquatic Invertebrates, Amphibians, Reptiles, and  
Nongame Fish.**

**4VAC15-360-10. Taking aquatic invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, and nongame  
fish for private use.**

A. Possession limits. Except as otherwise provided for in §29.1-418 of the Code of Virginia, 4VAC15-20-130, subdivision 8 of 4VAC15-320-40 and the sections of this chapter, it shall be lawful to capture and possess live for private use and not for sale no more than five individuals of any single native or naturalized (as defined in 4VAC15-20-50) species of amphibian and reptile and 20 individuals of any single native or naturalized (as defined in 4VAC15-20-50) species of aquatic invertebrate and nongame fish unless specifically listed below:

1. The following species may be taken in unlimited numbers from inland waters statewide: carp, bowfin, longnose gar, mullet, yellow bullhead, brown bullhead, black bullhead, flat bullhead, snail bullhead, white sucker, northern hogsucker, gizzard shad, threadfin shad, blueback herring (see 4VAC15-320-25 for anadromous blueback herring limits), white perch, yellow perch, alewife (see 4VAC15-320-25 for anadromous alewife limits), stoneroller (hornyhead), fathead minnow, golden shiner, and goldfish.
2. See 4VAC15-320-25 for American shad, hickory shad, channel catfish, white catfish, flathead catfish, and blue catfish limits.

3. For the purpose of this chapter, "fish bait" shall be defined as native or naturalized species of minnows and chubs (Cyprinidae), salamanders (each under six inches in total length), crayfish, and hellgrammites. The possession limit for taking "fish bait" shall be 50 individuals in aggregate, unless said person has purchased "fish bait" and has a receipt specifying the number of individuals purchased by species, except salamanders and crayfish which cannot be sold pursuant to the provisions of 4VAC15-360-60 and 4VAC15-360-70. However, stonerollers (hornyheads), fathead minnows, golden shiners, and goldfish may be taken and possessed in unlimited numbers as provided for in subdivision 1 of this subsection.

4. The daily limit for bullfrogs and snapping turtles shall be 15 and bullfrogs and snapping turtles may not be taken from the banks or waters of designated stocked trout waters.

5. The following species may not be taken in any number for private use: candy darter, eastern hellbender, diamondback terrapin, and spotted turtle. Any individual of these species possessed in captivity in Virginia on June 30, 2006, may be maintained in captivity until the animal's death, but the animal may not be sold or released on or after July 1, 2006. Any transfer of animals must have prior authorization of the director or his designee and may only be made to an educational facility.

6. Native amphibians and reptiles, as defined in 4VAC15-20-50, that are captured within the Commonwealth and possessed live for private use and not for sale may be liberated under the following conditions:

a. Period of captivity does not exceed 30 days;

b. Animals must be liberated at the site of capture;

c. Animals must have been housed separately from other wild-caught and domestic animals; and

d. Animals that demonstrate symptoms of disease or illness or that have sustained injury during their captivity may not be released.

B. Methods of taking species in subsection A. Except as otherwise provided for in the Code of Virginia, 4VAC15-20-130, 4VAC15-320-40, and other regulations of the board, and except in any waters where the use of nets is prohibited, the species listed in subsection A may only be taken by hand, hook and line, with a seine not exceeding four feet in depth by 10 feet in length, an umbrella type net not exceeding five by five feet square, small minnow traps with throat openings no larger than one inch in diameter, cast nets, and hand-held bow nets with diameter not to exceed 20 inches and handle length not to exceed eight feet (such cast net and hand-held bow nets when so used shall not be deemed dip nets under the provisions of §29.1-416 of the Code of Virginia). Gizzard shad and white perch may also be taken from below the fall line in all tidal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay using a gill net in accordance with Virginia Marine Resources Commission recreational fishing regulations. Bullfrogs may also be taken by gigging or bow and arrow and, from private waters, by firearms no larger than .22 caliber rimfire. Snapping turtles may be taken for personal use with hoop nets not exceeding six feet in length with a throat opening not exceeding 36 inches.

C. Areas restricted from taking mollusks. Except as provided for in §§29.1-418 and 29.1-568 of the Code of Virginia, it shall be unlawful to take mussels and the spiny riversnail (*Io fluviatilis*) in the Tennessee drainage in Virginia (Clinch, Powell and the North, South and Middle Forks of the Holston Rivers and tributaries). It shall be unlawful to take mussels in the James River and tributaries west of U.S. Route 29, in the entire North Fork of the Shenandoah River, and in the entire Nottoway River.

D. Areas restricted from taking salamanders. Except as provided for in §§29.1-418 and 29.1-568 of the Code of Virginia, it shall be unlawful to take salamanders in Grayson Highlands State Park and on National Forest lands in the Jefferson National Forest in those portions of Grayson, Smyth and Washington Counties bounded on the east by State Route 16, on the north by State Route 603 and on the south and west by U.S. Route 58.